

COFFEE EEE!! @#@ 表於…

No, IT'S TOFFEE!! -

THE ARGUMENT CONTINUES

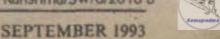
















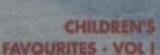
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LEC

PLAY FAVOURITES

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ANDW YOU HAVE THE POWER!



CHANDAMAMA

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NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 24 OCTOBER 1993 No. 4 THE FLOWER WITH A CURSE: Thangal, the bravest among the Tangkhul tribe, sets out in a boat loaded with "Shatabdika"-the flower that has been attracting the monster to Maninagar. As dusk settles on the horizon, Thangal keeps a watch out for the monster who is seen slowly rising from the sea. The youth notices that he does not head towards the land any more, but is coming towards the boat. Thangal rows the boat fast, so that he can lead him farther and farther away from the land. Does he succeed? Does the monster lay his hands on Thangal? The flower? VEER HANUMAN: Rama tells Sita in no uncer-

tain terms that he will not take her back. Everybody around them is aghast. Sita agrees to a test by fire. Lakshmana sets a fire burning. Sita enters the fire. The lord of Fire, Agni, comes out, carrying Sita like a child, and tells Rama that she has proved herself a chaste woman. Angels shower flowers on them. King Dasaratha descends from heaven to bless them. Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana get ready to return to Ayodhya.

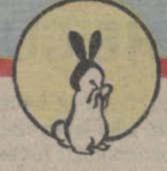
MEET Abanindranath Tagore in "Artists of Modern India"

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Why Children Evade Schools

Despite the fact that primary education has been made free, schools in most of the states have been witnessing student-dropouts. Naturally, the governments are perturbed. Some of them have tried to find out why children are evading schools.

A recent survey in Tamilnadu revealed that nearly 25 per cent of children are taken out of schools before they reach the Fourth standard and sent for work to help the family earn more income; another 25 per cent are needed in their homes to attend to household chores—like tending their little brothers and sisters, looking after cattle and poultry, or even cooking—as both parents are at work elsewhere. These are called economic reasons and the governments cannot do much about them.

A survey in Maharashtra has brought in other revelations. There is nothing much in schools to attract children and prompt them to remain in their classrooms! The survey has found that the teaching technique is poor and the children are unable to grasp the lessons. Part of the blame should go to the kind of text-books the teachers are expected to use, as most of them only show the author's grasp of the subject and do not help the teachers to explain it.

While on the matter of text-books, here's what a survey in Delhi has revealed: children going to nursery schools are given, on an average, seven text-books per year; a slightly older age group has to learn all that is given in not less than ten text-books! While parents worry about the money they spend on these text-books and the innumerable note-books the children will need every year, it makes a horrifying sight to see them carry the books in bags, hanging from their shoulders, on their backs or on their heads.

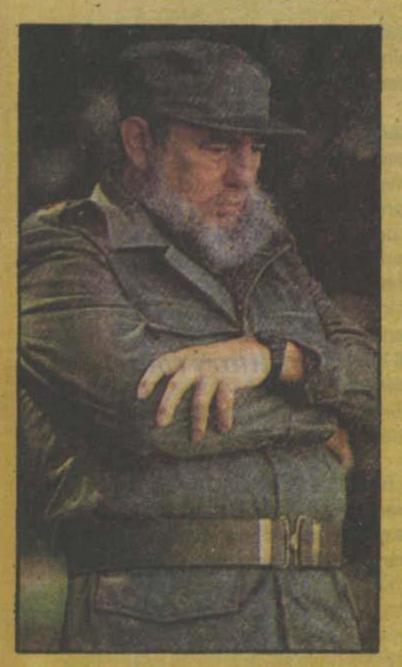
Well-known academics and educationists have several times raised their voices against this kind of harassment imposed on children. They must find a way to overhaul the present system of education so that children will not run away from schools.



THE CUBAN SCENE

n July 26, Cuba observed the 40th anniversary of its revolution. Like last year, there were no 'celebrations', because of the economic recession this Caribbean island has been passing through.

That day forty years ago, a young lawyer called Fidel Castro Ruz, steeped in Communist ideologies, led a band of rebels



and attacked the army barracks in Santiago. Their aim was to overthrow the oppressive rule of dictator Fulgencio Batista. Several lives were lost in the struggle, and Castro was captured and imprisoned. Three years later, he made another attempt, which again was unsuccessful. However, the third attempt on New Year day, 1959, succeeded, and Batista was forced to flee the country.

Castro established a socialist government in Havana, thereby straining the country's relations with neighbour U.S.A. which had all along kept a dominant influence on Cuba. In 1960, Castro who was Prime Minister appropriated all American businesses in Cuba without paying any compensation. The U.S.A. broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba and the next year tried to invade the island, but suffered defeat in the Bay of Pigs episode. Fidel Castro announced that Cuba would henceforth be a Communist state and initiated steps for economic development on Commu-

nist lines. Cuba's sole political party was renamed the Cuban Communist Party. In 1976, Castro became head of state (President) as well as of the government. In 1979, he became President of the non-aligned movement (NAM) and held office till the NAM met in New Delhi in 1982, when India's Prime



Minister Indira Gandhi took over the leadership of the NAM.

It is generally believed that Christopher Columbus had landed in Cuba in 1492—the year he discovered America. The island remained in the possession of Spain till it ceded it to the U.S.A. in 1898 after its defeat in the Spanish-American war. The American occupation of Cuba lasted only three years and in 1902 it became an independent republic. Till the Cuban dictator Batista captured power in 1933, the U.S.A. dictated the country's foreign policy. He ruled as President till 1959, except between 1944 and 1952.

During his 34-year-rule between 1959 and 1993, Fidel Castro

received great support from the

Soviet Union and the East European countries. However, with the collapse of Communism in that part of the world and the break-up of the Soviet Union, Cuba's economy began to suffer a regression. Friendly countries like Colombia and Argentina, who are members of the Latin American Federation, have been urging Cuba to patch up with the U.S.A., so that it will be persuaded to lift its



trade embargo on Cuba imposed 30 years ago. Fidel Castro, who was re-elected President in the February 1993 elections, has at last agreed to consider a proposal if it were to come from the U.S.A., at the same reiterating that he would not do away with Cuba's socialist system.

Despite the 99 per cent seats his party won in the elections to the National Assembly and the 14 provincial assemblies, 66-year-old President Castro remarked: "I hope five years from now, my countrymen will not ask me to be a candidate again."

Cuba is now one of the few countries—like China and Vietnam—where Communism exists. The youth of Vietnam, which sent rice to Cuba in May, now collecting 5,000,000 pads of writing paper and an equal number of pens for their comrades in hard-up Cuba.



SPORTS





No time for fans-fined

One of England's great cricketers, lan Botham, was fined under strange circumstances-he had no time to spend with his fans! Thirty-seven year-old Botham, who retired from first-class cricket in July, had signed an agreement with a brewery in Newcastle, England, that he would visit a stipulated number of pubs, where the drinks manufactured by the brewery would be served, and meet his fans for question-answer sessions. When he announced his retirement, he still had some more pubs to visit. The brewery sued him for breach of contract, and he was duly fined.

High-jump history

The difference between a world record four years ago and the one made recently was just 0.01 metre—both in the name of the Cuban high-jumper,



Javier Sotomayor, who cleared 2.45 metres on July 27 at Salamanca in Spain. His 2.44 metres exactly four years ago (July 29, 1989) created in San Juan, Puerto Rico, was a world record which, again, was an improvement by 0.01 metre over his own 2.43 metres made in September 1988. After his recent achievement, 25-year-old Sotomayor commented that his new record might not be erased "for several more years". More than 30 years ago, John Thomas of the U.S.A. broke the world record three times successively in 1960 (2.17, 2.18 and 2.22). The very next year, Valery Brumel of the Soviet Union, erased the record three times (2.23, 2.24 and 2.25); in 1962, he broke the record twice (2.26, 2.27); in 1963, he improved it to 2.28m. It took another 8 years (1971) for Pat Matzdorf (U.S.A.) to break it (2.29). Another U.S. jumper, Dwight Stones, erased it when he cleared 2.30m in 1973. He himself broke it twice in 1976 (2.31, 2.32). Then came Vladimir Yashchenko, of the



Soviet Union, who created two records in 1977 (2.33) and 1978 (2.34). Jacek Wszola of Poland and Gerd Wessig of East Germany erased it twice in 1980 (2.35 and 2.36 respectively). In 1983, Zhu Jianhua of China erased the record twice (2.37, 2.38) and improved it to 2.39m the very next year. In 1985, two jumpers from the Soviet Union, Rudolf Povarnitsyn (2.40) and Igor. Paklin (2.41) created new records. In 1987, Patrik Sjoberg of Sweden cleared 2.42m. In short, an improvement of 0.28m in 33 years!

Sans arm, leg-but tough

He lost an arm as well as a leg, yet he is a tough coach for the toughest (and most rough) of all games—Rugby. George Potter of New Zealand was once a Rugby star and a boxer, too—though New Zealand has never been prominent in that game. At the same time, it is quite popular in that island country and draws a large number of fans. Potter worked for the merchant navy. He lost his arm in an accident in Sydney harbour. He was taken to hospital where his leg had also to

be amputated. For ten long years he suffered pain, at the same time trying to forget it. He fitted himself with an artificial arm and and leg, straight away made his way to the fieldto become a



coach for the New Zealand Rugby League, which considers him as one of the two best coaches it ever had. When 56-year-old Potter enters the field, the players have only one complaint: "A tough guy—he won't brook any nonsense!"

Seconds that mattered

The World record for 100 metres 'sprint' is with Carl Lewis (U.S.A.)—9.86 seconds. The best timing of Britain's Linford Christie is 9.92 sec., which is a record in all meets in Europe. After competing against each other in Tokyo, Zurich, Las Vegas, and other places, where Christie reigned supreme, they were to meet again in Gateshead on July 30—their first ever contest in



Britain. The victor was offered 200 thousand pound sterling (Rs. 90 lakhs)! The best timing ever made in Gate-shead—10.29 seconds—was to the credit of Allen Wells of Britain. He predicted that Carl Lewis would find it impossible to go past Linford Christie. He proved right: Christie cut the tape at 10.08 seconds, while Lewis came third with a timing of 10.22 seconds, behind Jon Drummond (U.S.A.), who ran trace in 10.12 seconds.









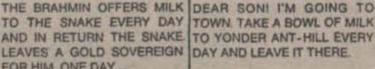








THE BRAHMIN OFFERS MILK DEAR SONI I'M GOING TO LEAVES A GOLD SOVEREIGN DAY AND LEAVE IT THERE. FOR HIM. ONE DAY ...





To cherish great men and make them his own is the most difficult of all difficult things. -Thirukkural



THE BRAHMIN'S SON DOES AS INSTRUCTED. HE TAKES A BOWL OF MILK TO THE ANT-HILL AND...



















Firmness in action depends on one's firmness of mind; all other abilities come naturally.



















A tree full of thorns should be felled when young, for when it is grown, it will harm the hand of the one who fells it.



















The great will always cover themselves with humility; those mean will exalt themselves in self-admiration.





Wonder Wonder All The Way

A teacher explained to the children in her class how the shells break and the chickens emerge from them.

"Isn't that wonderful—how the tiny chickens struggle and come out of their shells?" she asked at last.

"Wonderful, no doubt," said a little one. "But what appears to me more wonderful is how the chickens first got into the shells!"

We may laugh at the child's innocent wonder, because we know that the chicken did not enter the shell, it developed there. But it developed there because its life was already there in a different form.

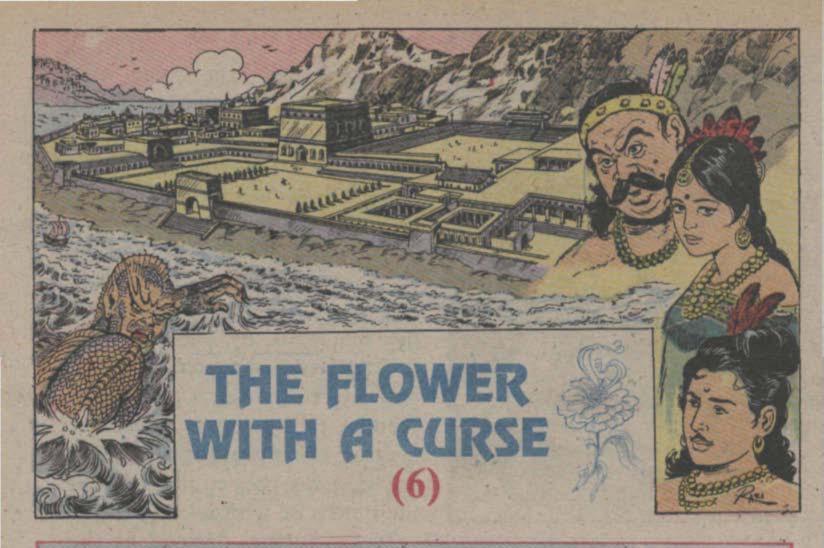
Let us look at everything with that child's innocence—and in no time everything will begin to appear so wonderful! A flower blooms. Wherefrom does a jasmine derive a certain kind of fragrance and a rose another kind? Where was that fragrance hidden? Was it in the earth? In the sunlight? In the air? In the water? In the seed of the plant?

It was there in the silent cooperation of all these things and before that in some mysterious power which conceived all the different fragrances!

Indeed, everything is mysterious. There is so much planning, so much harmony in Nature that it will continue to baffle us all the time.

We the-human beings have the power to do anything we like with Nature—to stop a river, to destroy a hill, to cut down a forest, to annihilate specie after specie of animals and birds, so on and so forth. But should we use that power according to our sweet will? Should we, who have failed to achieve harmony in our own human society, play with Nature's harmony?





(The tribals of Nungmai hills are overjoyed about the visit to them by the ruler of Maninagar. King Pratapavarma is accompanied by Princess Priyamvada. When he tells them of the main purpose of his visit, they assure him that they would do anything to protect the kingdom. They, too agree, that the monster has to be enticed by the flowers that attract him to Maninagar. The youth Thangal offers to undertake the hazardous mission. The princess has a last look at "Shatabdika", which will never be grown in the royal garden.)

The community dinner was a rare event for the Thangkhul tribe. It was generally held to mark their few festive occasions, or to celebrate the birthday of their Chieftain, or to honour one or a few among them for their achievements. That night, it was to commemorate the visit of their king, Pratapavarma, and Prin-

cess Priyamvada, as well as to bid farewell to and wish the youth, Thangal, all success in his hazardous mission.

Thangal was given the pride of place and was seated along with Chieftain Khamba and other elders of the tribe. They also made use of the opportunity to plan the strategy to entice the



monster away from Maninagar. If what the king had told them was true, the monster was none other than Prince Chandramani, who was cursed by the pujari Kulsreshta decades ago, and who was being drawn to the Nungmai hills by the exotic "Shatabdika", for which the prince had long, long ago taken a fancy.

The first exercise, therefore, was to get hold of as many of the flower as possible. Most of the tribals remembered to have seen the flower in bloom, but only Thangal was able to tell them the exact location. It was decided

that he would take along with him half-a-dozen young men. On reaching there, they would cut down the entire cluster of bamboos on top of the hill and carefully remove the flowers with their stems. As this would be done during the day, they would not have to bother about a possible visit by the monster, because from the account given by King Pratapavarma, the monster seemed to be say or afraid of making an appearance in broad daylight. So, they could go about their exercise without any fear.

It was further decided by the elders that the flowers, after being tied into bunches, would be left on the hill till Thangal is ready to start on his journey into the sea. Khamba asked them how many days it would take for a small boat to be made. Being people of the hills, they were not very sure whether they would be able to do a quick job And as the people residing on the sea coast in the southern parts of the kingdom had already fled away, the possibility of getting hold of a boat there was considered remote. That meant, a boat had to be made by them and taken to



the sea coast. Some of the tribals offered to build a boat as fast as they could.

Thangal went about choosing whoever would accompany him to get the flowers. And before they all dispersed, he touched the feet of the elders who blessed him. Khamba held him in an affectionate embrace, and calling Laisna to his side, escorted the brother and sister to their hut.

The next morning, Thangal and his six companions started for the hills. They spent a major part of the morning trekking the hilly terrain before they reached the cluster of bamboos. Without

losing any time, they began cutting down the trees. As they fell to the ground one after another, Thangal separated the flowers and tied them into bunches. They all worked tirelessly and non-stop and by evening all the trees that had flowers had come down. There were some half-a-dozen neat little bunches of flowers, too, which they left leaning against the bamboos they had untouched. Though saplings, they were rather tall, but as they were still growing, they knew that it might take many more years before flowers bloomed on them.







There were a few new shoots, and with some forethought, Thangal plucked a couple of them and tied them along with the flowers.

By the time they all got back to their dwellings, they found that the boat for Thangal was almost ready. "We should be able to put the boat out into the sea the day after tomorrow," Khamba told them. "There are a few finishing touches to be given and they should be over by tomorrow. Tonight and tomorrow, we shall keep a vigil, lest the monster succeeds in finding his way here. The day after, we'll collect the

flowers early in the morning and start for the sea coast. You all must be tired after a day's toil, so you may go and get some sleep and good rest. I've gathered enough people to keep a watch for the monster." The Chieftain sent the youth away.

Khamba himself joined the vigil for a long time before the other tribals persuaded him to go and rest. After dawn, they went and reported that there had been no indication of an altempt being made by any monster to reach the northern parts. However, that night they heard from afar eerie sounds of trees falling down and heavy stones being thrown around. The tribals who were keeping a watch had spread all over, but none of them saw any figure of a monster. The sound of falling trees continued late into the night and subsided in the early hours.

Soon after dawn, Thangal and some of his friends left for the hills to bring the bunches of flowers. When they came back with the flowers, they found that the boat was ready to be carried by four strong men to the sea coast. Khamba and Laisna, too,



were waiting for them. The girl held a small bundle tied with a piece of colourful cloth. "Your food, brother!" said Laisna, putting on a brave face. She was sad that Thangal would be away from her for some days. For how many days, she did not know.

The tribal party started on their journey to the sea coast led by Khamba. The people accompanied them to the edge of the plateau where, only the other day, they had received King Pratapavarma. Behind the Chieftain and Thangal walked Laisna and three young men carrying the bunches of flowers. After them came the four men carrying the boat on their shoulders. One of them at the rear also carried a paddle in his hand. They all walked briskly, as Khamba had told them they should reach the sea coast in the south well before dusk.

When they reached the sea, they found there was some more time for the sun to sink in the horizon. The four men lowered the boat on the sand waiting for the signal to push it into the sea. Thangal and the other youth who carried the flowers placed them

in the boat in a row. The fragrance of the flowers spread as the evening rays of the sun caressed the petals. Thangal touched the feet of the Chieftain as he took leave of him. Khamba enclosed him in an affectionate embrace before he released him. "Take care, my son! May the Divine Mother bless you with success in your mission!"

As Laisna handed the cloth bundle to Thangal, she said, "Come back soon, brother! We all will be anxiously waiting for you!" He caught hold of her hands. "Don't worry about me, I shall come back soon. Remember me to the princess and be of help to her!"

Thangal got into the boat, paddle in hand. The four men who had brought the boat to the seaside gave it a push till a wave came and took it in its tide as it receded. They went back to the seaside to join the others and watched the boat bobbing up and down till the waves carried it far away out into the sea. The boat and the lone boatman in it were now a mere speck in the horizon. The sun had just then set.

Chieftain Khamba, Laisna,





and the seven men started on their journey back with a heavy heart. They all had suddenly fallen silent. Khamba caught hold of Laisna by her shoulders as if to reassure her of her brother's safety. The devastation they had noticed on their way to the sea coast was visible on a vaster area as they made their way to the capital. They, too, concluded that it would have been the handiwork of only a monster, and not human beings.

They hurried to get away from the southern parts, lest they were caught up by the monster. But now that the northern hill ranges or any other part had none of the flower, Shatabdika, they doubted whether the monster would still be attracted to Maninagar. On the way, they had to pass through a forest. As by then it had become quite dark, they decided to stay in the forest till daybreak. Though they made themselves comfortable, they remained alert for any unusual sound or movement.

Early morning, they resumed their journey to the capital. On reaching the palace, they sought permission to meet the king. Pratapavarma was in conversation with Commander Gambhir Singh at that time. They received Chieftain Khamba warmly and were surprised to be told that Thangal had already left on his mission. "We shall never forget his service to the kingdom," the king assured the tribal chief. "You all have come to save Maninagar from nemesis; our subjects will ever be grateful to their tribal brethren."

Pratapavarma sent for Princess Priyamvada, who was very happy to see Laisna. "Come,





Laisna, from now on, you'll be my companion."

As she led the girl to her Laisna," said Prapartments, Laisna told the "Call me 'sister'. Thangal will considered you before he started on his and successful."

he would be back soon."

"No 'highness' and all that, Laisna," said Priyamvada coyly. "Call me 'sister'. Yes, I too hope Thangal will come back soon, and successful."

-To continue

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES









NEWS FLASH

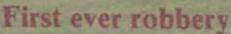
Zoo asks for MAN

The zoo is where you go to see different kinds of animals, birds, and reptiles. Right? Don't be surprised if you find a board with "MAN—Homo sapiens" written on it hanging from a cage when you visit a zoo in Belgrade, capital of Yugoslavia. The zoo director believes that man, like several fauna, is an endangered species and should be presented to visitors as

such. So, he recently advertised—for man—offering a part time (8a.m. to 8p.m.) 'job', to sit inside a cage, spending his time reading, watching the TV, or doing any other respectable activity he likes to pursue. Replies poured in, one of the first to apply being an unemployed computer expert.

Record in back-walk

Everybody can walk, but how many can walk backwards? For a few yards may be, not 81 kilometres, like M. Chandran did the other day, from sunrise to sunset in the Nehru stadium in Coimbatore—thereby earning an entry in the book of records. In about 12 hours, he went round and round—backwards—in the stadium making 76 circuits continuously. He will soon be repeating his performance in Madras, New Delhi, and other places. A black belt in karate, he runs—, not backwards—10 km every morning and does a 5 km back-walk once a week. Chandran, hailing from Trichur, Kerala, is settled down in Coimbatore and has mimicry and mono-acting as his hobbies.



Believe it or not! The tiny island nation—Cook Island—in the Pacific Ocean never had robbery among the crimes reported by the police. That is, till a man was caught red-handed in July and charged with armed robbery. He broke into a hotel room in Rarotonga and stole New Zealand currency notes valued 24,750 U.S. dollars. Long-serving police officers told reporters that they had never heard of any robbery on the island and hoped that it would be the first and last instance. The local radio stations reported the incident with a touch of sarcasm: Cook Island has caught up with the rest of the world!

Lithuanian example

The entire cabinet of Ministers in Lithuania—one of the Baltic states—has decided to quit smoking altogether. When those who govern set an example, one can presume that those who are governed will emulate them. Won't they?







The Hand

The cheetal and langur passed the day in each other's company. It was strange; but it was true. Krishna had come across this strange friendship between two species of animals in the Kanha jungle in Madhya Pradesh. She had come to Kanha to study this relationship.

Krishna found them together day after day. Almost every day. The troop of langurs would be on the trees. The cheetals would be quietly grazing underneath. The langurs were noisy. They jumped about on the tree branches, chattering all the time. They were as playful while eating as when they were not busy plucking fruits and leaves. Though the two groups were found together, they did not mix. They did not even play together.

The langurs chose the grazing ground. The cheetals just followed. When the cheetals settled down for rest in the afternoon, the langurs too would doze on





the forks of thick branches. At night, when the langurs disappeared in the thick jungle trees, the cheetals sought out an open glade. They would lie in the middle of the glade in a tight bunch. That way they were safe from the night predators.

Krishna had come to Kanha first about fifteen years ago in the company of her parents. She had noticed the friendship between the two different species of animals, and had decided even then that one day she would return to Kanha to study this friendship. She wanted to, after

graduating from the University, but her parents were against it. They were afraid of her safety. She persisted. She returned to Kanha to keep her date with the langurs and cheetals.

Krishna was disappointed in the beginning. All her efforts to come closer to the grazing group were frustrated by the langurs. They would raise an alarm as soon as they spotted her in the bush. The cheetals would flee instantly. The langurs would follow them. It would take her one or two hours to re-locate the group. Some days she would not find them at all. Then she returned to the rest-house sad and tired.

Tracking the group would often bring Krishna face to face with danger to difficult obstacles. Once she was so hot on their trail that she missed seeing a herd of bisons in her path. They looked huge and fearsome. A bull had stepped forward. It was pawing the dust, challenging her presence. She ran for her life. She ran all the way back to the rest-house forgetting to pick up her bicycle on the way. When she reached the rest-house, she found



scratches all over. Her clothes were torn. And she was breathless.

"My dear girl, you invite trouble by wearing those colourful clothes," a tourist said. She realised for the first time that she had been wearing clothes with large patterns and loud colours. The clothes gave her away to the langurs. She made a trip to the town and bought herself jungle outfit of olive green colour.

The dress helped her hide sucessfully. The langurs could not spot her. It pleased her to know that they did look for her. Perhaps they missed her. That day, she took notes and photographs at leisure. Of course, a couple of times the leader of the langurs did find her. It would grunt and bare its yellow fangs to frighten her. But she ignored the langur. Once it came too close for safety. She decided to take its photograph before escaping. She pressed the button on the camera. The flashlight blinded the langur momentarily. When it regained its sight, it ran away screaming. After that the langurs did not bother her. They did not like her presence, though.



Krishna had marked on paper their grazing circle. The group could not be found twice at one spot. Every day they moved to a new spot. They completed the circle in a week. The circle ran along the mohuwa trees. The langurs would pluck the tender shoots, petals, flowers, and fruit, taste some and throw away the rest. The cheetal would happily feast on these. Besides the mohuwa trees, the group favoured trees with tender leaves and shoots. Better still, if they had flowers and fruits. Besides, there was always grass for the





cheetals.

She was puzzled. The langurs did not throw down enough flowers, petals, and fruits to satisfy the appetite of the cheetals. Why did they then always move together? There had to be an explanation. There was. The tiger: The common enemy of the two. The langurs spotted the tiger at a distance. They could do it from their high perch. They would raise an alarm. The cheetal would not wait to know the nature of the danger. They would run instantly. The tiger chased them. But mostly he failed to

catch one. Meanwhile the langurs, too, would disappear. All this still did not explain fully the association between the two. So far it benefited the cheetal. What did the langur get out of it? She learnt that, too.

One day, while returning to the rest-house, she came on to a lone mohuwa tree. A number of langurs were atop. They were jumping about in sheer terror. She noticed a tiger sitting under the tree. It was looking up at the langurs. She took cover in a nearby bush and watched. A langur missed his hold and fell. The tiger caught him in mid-air and took him into the bush. The remaining langurs immediately jumped down and ran for the thick jungle.

Krishna would take her post much before the two groups arrived. She knew by now where to find them each day. She would carry bananas, bread, and biscuits. She placed them on the ground well away from her. But the langurs would not take these tidbits. Gradually, they started snatching a piece stealthily. Krishna would smile to herself. She started moving closer and



closer. At last, the langurs would come to take away the tidbits within a few feet from her. Sometimes, one or the other would sit there itself and enjoy the feast.

One day, a wheel of her bicycle was punctured. She did not return to the rest-house. Instead, she walked the distance to the spot where the group had to appear that day. By the time she took her position, she was extremely tired. She put her back to a boulder under the bush and closed her eyes to rest a bit. She did not know when she went to sleep. She woke up with a start when a paw landed on her shoulder.

She returned to see the leader of the langurs standing behind her. She was frightened. She was about to cry but she did not. The expression in the langur's eyes stopped her. Then the langur left. He caught hold of a low branch

and jumped on to the tree. The very next moment he was raising an alarm. The cheetals fled instantly. A huge tiger emerged from the bush and went after them. But the cheetals had put a good distance behind. The tiger felt cheated. He was angry. He was returning to the tree to get the mischief-maker.

Krishna was also terrified. She did not know why she jumped on to her feet. Perhaps she wanted to run. But the tiger spotted her and turned to her. In her nervousness, she put her foot down on the camera she had dropped. The flash went off. The sharp light unnerved the tiger. He turned and disappeared into the bush. Krishna collapsed on to the ground. She was thinking of the langur who saved her life.

-Raj Gill



Towards Better English

Of straw and hay

Those were days of water scarcity. There was not enough water to draw from the well, so young Thirumalai, of Pattabhiram in Tamilnadu, went to his neighbour to take water from his well which had not dried up. Murugesan was fortunate as the taps in his house, situated at a lower level, were still yielding water though during limited hours



only, and he did not have to depend on his well, as Thirumalai was aware of. That alone had prompted him to go to Murugesan, carrying two buckets to fill in. But strangely, Murugesan refused to allow Thirumalai to take water from his well. The boy could not think of any reason for Murugesan not to oblige him. He went back home and told mother. "Don't you

know, he is a dog in the manger? Try whether you can get some water from the river. You have to walk some distance!" "That does not matter, mother!" he said, running out of the house with the buckets. On his way to the river he recollected his mother's words about Murugesan and wondered what she meant by them. A person who keeps something from another, although he does not want it himself, is like the dog which gets into the manger for a nap and barks at the cattle and drives them away from eating the hay in the manger which the dog itself does not eat. There is a well-known Aesop's fable of such a dog.

Who is a strawman? asks Jyotiranjan Biswal of Dhenkanal, Orissa. A 'man of straw' is someone who has no substance, financially speaking. Can anyone rely upon a man without substance? No. One will be well advised not to go to a strawman for any help—especially monetary help, though he may not be a dog in the manger!



CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-59



They pine themselves to death

Among the taller birds, the Saras Crane—about five feet high—is an elegant bird. The entire plumage is a pale grey, except the lower neck and the tips of the wings which are white. The upper portion of the neck and the naked head is red. The red legs are long and bare.

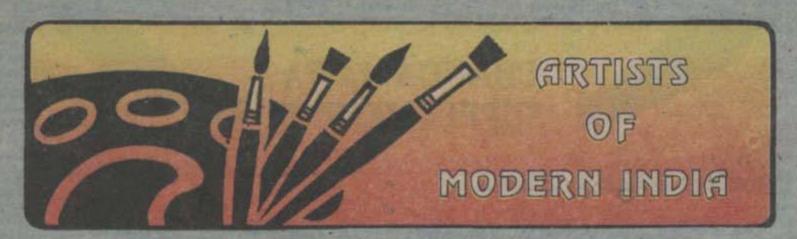
The hardiest of all cranes, the Saras is unusually bold and is not afraid of human beings. They can be commonly seen close to human habitation, feeding on insects and grains in fields.

They are usually seen in pairs and are believed to mate for life, and be devoted and faithful to each other. If one of them were to die, the other pines itself to death. No. of the second secon

Newly weds in India are often blessed with love and affection as those of the krauncha (Saras Crane).

The Saras Crane is considered the world's tallest flying bird. The rather heavy take off is followed by slow rhythmical strokes of the large wings. As they fly, they can be heard to make sonorous trumpet-calls.

They choose the middle of a flooded field to make their huge nests of straw, reeds, and grass. The nesting season is between July and December, immediately after the monsoon.





JAMINI ROY

There is an artist whose paintings will immediately appear to you familiar although you might not have seen them earlier. It is because he beautifully combines in his art the folk style of India and a refined modern technique.

He is Jamini Roy, born in 1887 in a village named Beliatole in Bankura district of West Bengal.

The population of his village, like



any other typical village of India of bygone days, was divided into people who followed different vocations. Together, they made the village selfsufficient.

The boy Jamini would slip into his neighbourhood and stand watching the activities of the potters, the carpenters, the weavers and the toy-makers.

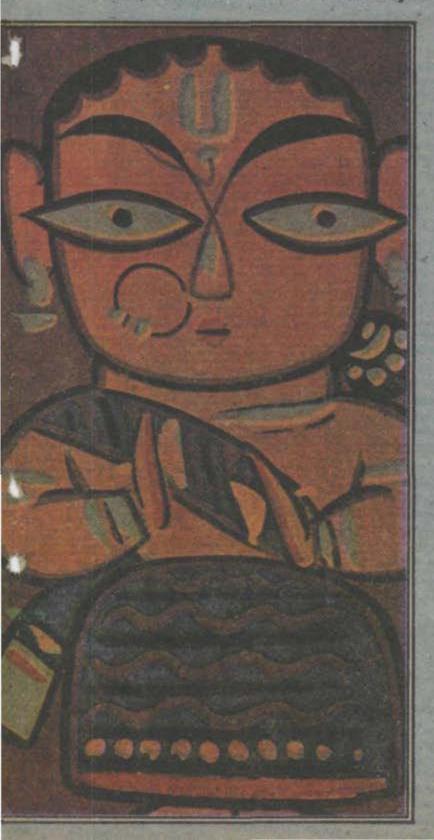


There was also a family of painters in the village, several members of which drew on scrolls. It is in observing them at work that Jamini spent hours.

Soon Jamini was seen drawing pictures himself. There was not much scope for receiving any training in art in those days. Jamini's father was a middle-class villager. Even then he admitted Jamini to the Government School of Art in Calcutta.

The Calcutta school imparted lessons mostly in the European style of art. Jamini grew well-versed in such techniques. But when he was applauded for his talent, he himself decided to develop a style of his own, following the kinds of art the village folks drew. He chose themes from the tradition of the native folks, followed their pattern of drawing and used the colours they used. There was a vigour in his art, a rhythm, which made them quite distinct and extremely attractive. His talent was widely recognised. He influenced a number of budding artists who turned to typical Indian subjects and style.

Jamini Roy died in April 1972.



DO YOU KNOW?

- 1. When was Bangladesh born?
- 2. River Jhelum was known by a different name in ancient India. What was it?
- 3. Germany was split into East Germany and West Germany at the end of the Second World War (1945). The two were unified later. When?
- 4. Nalsarovar is a famous bird sanctuary. In which Indian State is it located?
- 5. A world leader brought an end to the holy Roman empire, calling it neither 'holy' nor an 'empire'. Who?
- 6. When did Sikkim become the 22nd State of India?
- 7. A star is 28 times brighter than the sun. Name the star.
- 8. How many 'official' languages are there in India, according to the Constitution?
- 9. There was a gap of nearly 1,500 years between the Ancient Games in Greece and the Modern Olympic Games. When was the first Modern Olympic Games held?
- 10. An Indian scientist is believed to have used zero as a mathematical numeral first. Who?
- 11. Which Indian tree is the most benefical, medically?
- 12. Which is the smallest state in the world?
- 13. Which is the most famous temple of the Pallava dynasty?
- 14. Which country in the world consists of more than 13,000 islands?
- 15. The nuclear scientist, Dr. Raja Ramanna, is famous for something else also. What?

Answers

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I. March 26, 1971

Tales From Many Lands (Italy)

GOOFFA THE FOOL

nce upon a time in a small hamlet there lived a widow and her son, Gooffa. So poor were they that one day they had nothing to eat except a few crumbs of bread.

But Gooffa was not only lazy but also foolish.

"Gooffa dear, go and try to sell this hat for a good price," said his mother. "But mind you, don't deal with either a chatterbox or a dumb fellow."

The lad at once set out with a tune on his lips. Soon he met a young man. "It's a fine hat you have with you," the stranger observed inspecting it. "Will you give it to me? I'll pay you a good amount of money."

"No, I shan't sell it to you. You talk too much," replied the boy and walked away.

Then he came across a washerman and showed him his ware.

"It's indeed a handsome hat. How much do you want for it?"



he asked.

"Ten silver pieces."

"That's too much! Could you please lower the price?" enquired the washerman.

"No! No! You don't deserve to have this hat. You look to be a rather talkative fellow," replied Gooffa and went on his way.

All the passers-by he came across struck him as too talkative and he refused to sell his hat to any of them. Thus, meandering here and there he reached the crossroads where stood a stone-statue. Going up to him he asked, "Sir, would you like to buy this hat?"





He received no reply.

"By following my mother's advice, I have not been able to sell the hat so far. If I continue to follow her instructions, I cannot sell this hat at all. Let me try to sell it to this fellow even if he is dumb," decided Gooffa.

"This is a fine hat and costs only ten silver pieces," he said but his prospective customer remained silent!

"At last! I've found someone who doesn't speak a single word! You're to my mind the most deserving person for this hat and I'm going to sell it to you," said

Gooffa and placing the hat on the statue's head spread his palm for the payment.

Seeing no reaction on the buyer's face he added sympathetically, "You must be unwell. Don't worry if you can't pay me now. I'll come back for the money tomorrow." And he briskly walked homewards, happy for the success of his mission.

"How much did you get for the hat?" asked his anxious mother.

"Mother, the buyer seemed to be unwell today. I'm going to collect the money tomorrow," replied Gooffa.

The next day Gooffa once again went to the crossroads. His silent customer stood where he was but the hat had clean disappeared. "Now, will you please pay me the ten silver pieces?" he demanded. But as before he received no reply. After several earnest efforts to extract his money, he lost patience and angrily picking up a staff launched a solid blow on the statue's face. Off fell the head on the ground and along with it fell down a small bag that was lodged inside. Gooffa picked up the bag and untied its strings, and there sparkled in the sunlight a handful

of silver pieces.

He pranced home and said to his mother in one single breath, "Mother, I must tell you that I got this price only because I disregarded your advice."

His mother did not ask him any further questions. At least she had enough now to provide

for the next few weeks.

"Son," said his mother one day, "you can't just loaf around and do nothing. That's not the way to lead one's life. I've fixed up a job for you with the cobbler. You're going to start from tomorrow. But remember, don't do whatever anybody asks you to do. Apply your common sense to everything."

So, very early the next morning, Gooffa the fool went to join his work. The cobbler, handing him a piece of leather, said, "Now go to the river and wash it well enough. If you don't, you will get a good thrashing from me."

"My mother says I should not do whatever anybody asks me to do. But I know my mother's advice does not yield any result. So I must do whatever anybody



asks me to do!" he decided.

Gooffa rubbed and scrubbed and washed the leather all morning long. "How am I to know that I've washed it well enough not to receive the beatings? Whom can I ask? There is not a soul here," he said to himself.

Just then he saw a boat sailing in the river. He waved at it and shouted on the top of his voice. "Hey! Ho! Hey! Ho! Come here. Will you?"

"Someone is frantically calling us. Let's row towards him and see what's the matter," said the oarsman, turning the boat





towards the shore.

As soon as the boat approached Gooffa, he spread out the leather and asked, "Sirs, this is washed well enough, isn't it so?"

"What? You bothered us to say this much?" roared the oarsman and he gave the boy a sound beating with his stick.

"Then what should I say?" cried Gooffa.

"Now just say, 'God, speed them up!' so that we can make up for the delay you have caused us," replied the oarsman and he asked his men to row on. So poor Gooffa, the leather slung over his shoulders, went on repeating loud and clear, "God, speed them up! God, speed them up!" Soon he came across a hunter taking a careful aim with his gun at a couple of hares. "God, speed them up!" said Gooffa. The wee little creatures got frightened and sped away.

"You naughty boy! You've spoilt my hunt today," shouted the hunter and he boxed Gooffa's ears.

"But what should I have said?" wailed Goofa.

"God, let them be killed is what you must say," advised the hunter looking for another prey.

Gooffa continued on his way repeating his new refrain when he met two fellows fighting with each other. "God," he said, "let them be killed!" At once the two men stopped quarrelling and pounced on him. "What! You want us to be killed, eh?" They gave him a thorough beating.

"But what must I say?" asked Gooffa faintly.

"You should have said, 'God, separate them!"

"Okay, God, please separate them..." he began repeating



and limped along when he happened to pass a newly-wed couple returning from the church.

"We're just married and you're praying for our separation?" said the bridegroom and he thrashed the poor boy black and blue.

"Then do advise me what must I say!"

"You should say, 'God, make them laugh and let them be merry!"

A funeral party was winding its way towards the cemetery when it was heard loud and clear, "God, make them laugh and let them be merry!" Someone noticing Gooffa gave him such a blow on the head that he fainted.

When he opened his eyes it was already dusk and he decided to

keep his mouth shut till he reached the cobbler's dwelling. Alas, his master too had his share of thrashing in store for the poor boy. "What? You took all day long to wash a small piece of leather!" he said and sacked him outright.

So poor Gooffa, his body aching from head to toe plodded homewards. His mother chided him when he recounted his adventures. "These beatings and thrashings should now bring some sense into your head," she said.

They indeed did. For, from that day onwards a great change came over the poor little boy. He was no longer lazy and foolish and worked hard and joyfully and always applying his common sense to everything.

Retold by Anup Kishore Das





LEAVES FROM THE LIVES OF THE GREAT

The Black Gandhi

Last month, this page featured a great Indian—Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who strove for the emancipation of people who were once considered "untouchable". A similar role was played in the U.S.A. by Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-68), who fought for the rights of the 'black' Americans and became a martyr in the cause he pursued.

Luther was a small boy when, one day, he accompanied his father to the city market. He forgot himself in the dazzling lights and the brightly lit shop windows. "What would you like to have?"

asked the affectionate father. "A pair of shining shoes!" came the reply.

Father and son entered a departmental store and sat in front of the shoe racks. There were two rows of seats—the one in the front meant for the whites, and the one behind for the blacks. They took two seats in the front row much to the annoyance of the shop assistant—a white—who asked them to move behind, telling them he would attend to them only if they changed seats. "If that is so, we would not wish to buy anything from here," said Rev. King as he walked out leading his son.

Another day, the boy went home crying. His mother took him in her arms. "Luther, what happened?" "My friends won't play with me. Their mothers have asked them not to. Why mama?" he asked, wiping his tears. His mother had no

answer, but she held him closely to her bosom.

He connected the two incidents—when his father had to come out of the shop with a feeling of insult and when he himself was boycotted by his own friends. He realised, there were whites with black hearts and blacks—like him—with white hearts. When he grew up and a better realisation of how the blacks were being treated came to him, he told them: "We're only trying to live; we do not live. We must change this attitude!" This inspired his people and increased their faith in themselves. The blacks considered him as their leader.

Luther's father and grandfather were both priests who encouraged the Negroes to fight for their rights. They were prevented from mingling with the whites. They had separate schools, and separate seats in buses, trains, and restaurants. Young Luther revolted against such racial discrimination. He, too, decided to become a priest, as he had already made a mark as a powerful speaker and he felt he would

reach his people better through sermons.

On March 9, 1965, the police attacked a peaceful rally of the Negroes of Selma, in Alabama. Some 70 blacks were injured. The next day, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. himself led about 500 blacks in a peaceful procession. When the police stopped them, they sat down ready to face the police bullets. They prayed: "O Lord! Forgive them, for they know not what they're doing!" Passive resistance was born in the U.S.A. that day. Martin Luther King was hailed by the world as "the black Gandhi".

The U.S.A. introduced several enactments to end racial discrimination. In 1964, Martin Luther King Jr. was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Four years later, on April 4, 1968, he fell to a white assassin's bullet. He was only 39 then.





New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

A Question of Friendship

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King! You seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. Perhaps if you listen to my story, you will not feel the weight you're carrying." The vampire then



narrated the following story.

Lokanathan was just an ordinary trader. He was a painter and a music-lover as well. His wife Umayal somehow did not like their life in a village far away from the town or city. She often prevailed upon her husband to shift to a town. In view of her insistence, Lokanathan decided to sell away his house and fields and move to the nearest town where he thought he would start his business. After selling away most of his property, there was not much left for him to take with him. He engaged a bullock-cart, into which he loaded his things, and got in along with Umayal.

They had got gone far away from the village when the bullock-cart broke down, but before it met with an accident, the driver made Lokanathan and wife get down from the cart. They did not know what to do. A little later, they heard another bullock-cart coming from the opposite direction. Lokanathan's driver hailed the cart and told the passengers how his own cart had broken down, and requested for help.

A hefty gentleman sporting a fearsome moustache got down from that cart. "Who is travelling in your cart?" he asked the driver. "If the people are known to me, I shall certainly help them." When he went up to Lokanathan, he thought his face was familiar. 'Haven't I met this man earlier?' he asked himself.

When they introduced themselves, they remembered that they were once friends. Guruswami studied in the same school where Lokanathan himself had had his education. He was now living in the town and was quite rich. "My friend, I'm on my way



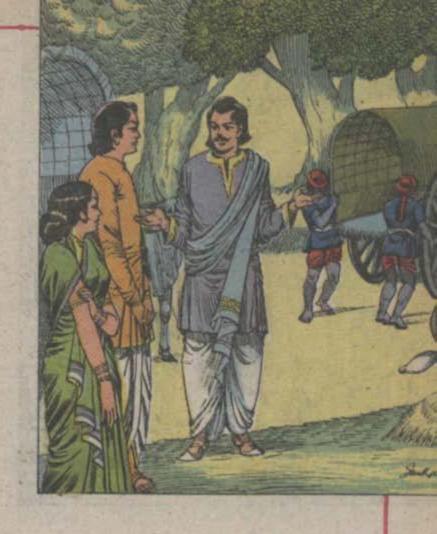
to attend to an important matter," he told Lokanathan. "I shall give you my friend's address in the town. Please stay with him till I get back. He'll make you comfortable. After I return, we shall fix up a good place for you. Meanwhile, I shall send a cart from the next village for you to proceed to the town. Kindly wait here till the cart picks you up."

"I'm so happy that I met you, Guruswami, I shall never forget the help you have extended to us now," Lokanathan thanked his friend profusely.

Umayal protested to her husband. "Why didn't you tell me till now that you've a friend in the town?"

"Many years ago, we both were in the same school," Lokanathan explained to her. "We had an intimate friend, Shanmugham. We were thick friends. They used to compliment me about my drawings. Often they would ask me to sing old folk songs which they appreciated much. When we completed our education we left school. I was meeting Guruswami again only today."

"Is Shanmugham also residing

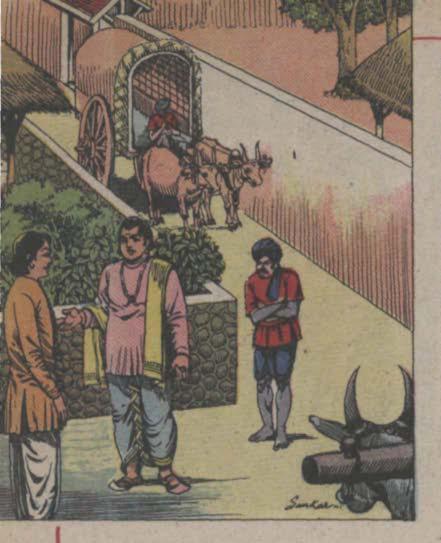


in the same town?" Umayal queried.

"Yes, that's what Guruswami hinted," said Lokanathan. "Somehow he gave me the impression that he and Shanmugham have fallen out. Guruswami didn't want me to enquire much about Shanmugham."

Soon, a bullock-cart sent by Guruswami arrived and Lokana-than and Umayal continued their journey to the town, where they had to pass through a narrow road at one time. A bullock-cart came from the opposite direction and there was not enough way for





the carts to pass. Lokanathan's driver got down and asked the other driver why he did not give way.

"This is my master Shanmugham's cart which has never given way to other carts, don't you know?" the driver asked rudely.

The other driver went and told Lokanathan that the bullock-cart belonged to Shanmugham. Who could be this Shanmugham? wondered Lokanathan. He went and peeped inside the cart. The two friends recognised each other and began talking of old times. Naturally,

hoth mentioned Guruswami's name. "Yes, he lives in this town. He has earned a lot, but his wealth is just half of what I've made. Yet he is jealous of me. So, I don't meet him often," said Shanmugham, adding, "in fact, I'm on my way to the neighbouring country, but now that I've met you, I'm postponing my journey. You may please go to my house. My wife will receive you. I shall soon come back and be with you. My accountant will show you the way."

After Shanmugham went away, the accountant got into the other cart and took Lokanathan and Umayal to his master's house and left them at the gate. "My instructions are to take you up to the gate. I've done my duty. Let me now go back to my master."

Lokanathan was surprised over the man's behaviour. Anyway, he and Umayal went up to the main door and knocked. A woman opened the door. "Aren't you Shanmugham's wife?"

"Yes. But who are you?" she asked him. "What do you want?"

Lokanathan answered smilingly, "I'm Shanmugham's old friend, Lokanathan. Your hus-

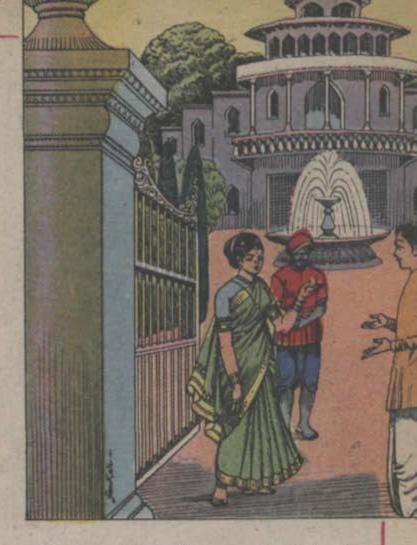


band has sent me here."

"How strange! My husband had never told me about any friend called Lokanathan," the woman remarked. "I don't think I've seen you before. I doubt whether my husband, too, had seen you for once at least! If you had been such a good friend, he would have mentioned your name at least once. I don't think I can allow you in under such circumstances!"

"Oh! I forgot to mention this to you. Your husband had sent his accountant to show us the way. He came up to the gate with us and left us there to go back to Shanmugham. Right now we've to seek your obligation," said Lokanathan humbly. "But you're not even allowing us inside. If we had known this earlier, we would have gone to Guruswami's place."

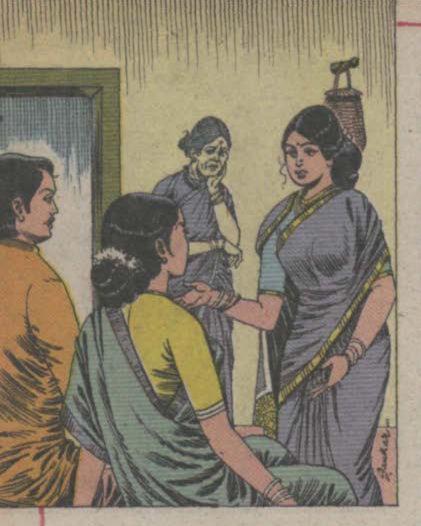
"What did you say?" Shanmugham's wife flared. "So, you're Guruswami's people, aren't you? I won't allow anyone mentioning his very name to come in. It'd be better if you go away from here this instant!"



Umayal could not brook the insult showered on her husband. "So much for your friend's sincerity and regard! You were praising him sky high! Of what use?" she rebuked her husband.

"Umayal, we left our village and decided to go to a town not expecting any help from any friend. It was by sheer accident that we met Guruswami and Shanmugham on our way. And we took their word for granted. Come, night is approaching, let's go and find a resting-place, even if it is a little hut!"





They got into the cart and asked the driver to proceed. They had not gone any distance when they saw an eating place run by an old woman. They went into the residence, where they were welcomed by the old lady herself. Lokanathan asked her whether they could stay there for the night. "Don't you have anybody else here to stay with?" the woman asked.

Lokanathan was reluctant to mention Shanmugham's name, so he said, "We know of one Guruswami, but we dont't know

where he stays."

"Oh! You're friends of Guruswami? I shall take you there. He and his wife are good people. If they were to come to know that you had stayed with me and eaten food from here, they might feel insulted. So, let's go there immediately," pleaded the woman.

She took them to Guruswami's house and introduced them to his wife. "Oh! You're Lokanathan? I know that you both were schoolmates. He used to tell me a lot about you. Come in. Please stay here till he comes back from his tour. I'm happy that I can be of some help to you!"

Somehow or the other, Shanmugham heard that Lokanathan and his wife were staying at Guruswami's house. He rushed there. "My, dear friend! I heard all that had happened at my place. I feel ashamed. You must forgive me. Please go with me to my house!" he pleaded.

Lokanathan thought for a while and said, "No, Shan-mugham, let's stay here. You shouldn't bother!" Shan-mugham went on pleading with



Lokanathan, but he did not accept Shanmugham's invitation.

The vampire concluded the story and turned to Vikramaditya. "O King! Shanmugham postponed his journey for the sake of his friend. He asked for forgiveness for his wife's behaviour. Yet, Lokanathan preferred to stay back at Guruswami's house. Why didn't he accept Shanmugham's invitation? Suppose he had gone with Shanmugham, he might have even helped Lokanathan set up business. Guruswami, on the other hand, continued his journey after merely giving Lokanathan the address of a friend. He didn't suggest that Lokanathan could go to his own house. Wasn't he trying to avoid Lokanathan? He could have guessed who among the two was the real friend. If you know the answers to my questions, yet prefer to remain silent, beware, your head will be blown to pieces!"

The king was unruffled. "Lokanathan had given a deep thought and then only took a decision," he told the vampire.



"Shanmugham had merely wanted to impress Lokanathan by talking about his wealth, comparing it with the earnings made by Guruswami. It was not his intention to extend any hospitality to Lokanathan. If he had remembered his old time friend, he would have certainly mentioned his name to his wife at least once. However, when he returned, he was struck with shame when he heard that Lokanathan and wife were staying at Guruswami's house. He went there, pleaded with Loka-

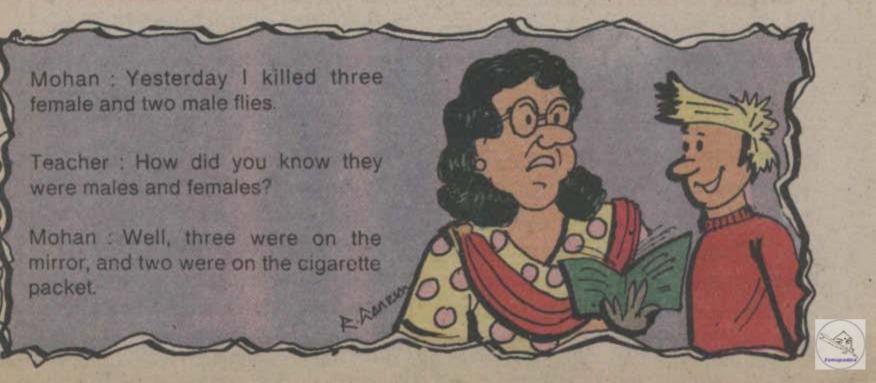


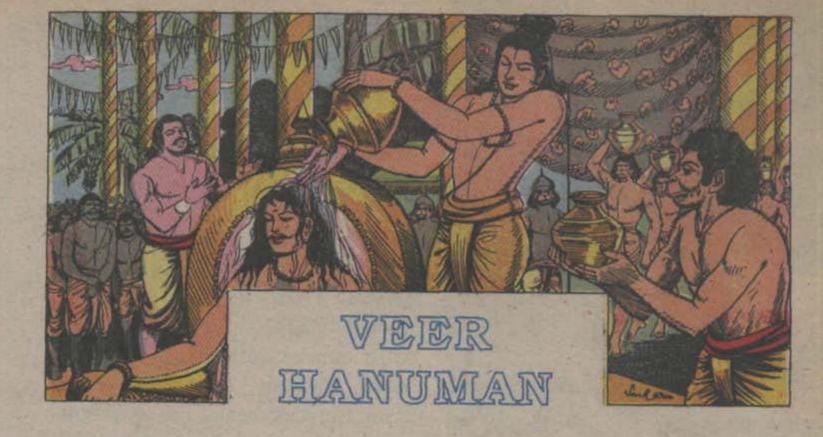


nathan, but he refused his invitation. Whereas, Guruswami sent a Shamugh bullock-cart for Lokanathan to proceed to the town and asked him to wait till he returned had once promising to fix up a house for him later. He was happy that his wife had extended hospitality to with him his friend and wife in his absence. Sword a Lokanathan knew that Guru-vampire.

swami, though not so rich as. Shamugham, was a more sincere friend."

The vampire realised that he had once again been outwitted by the king. He flew back to the ancient tree carrying the corpse with him. Vikramaditya drew his sword and went after the vampire.





(36)

(After Rama receives arrows and other weapons sent by Lord Indra, besides the Lord's own chariot and charioteer, he fights Ravana relentlessly. Sage Aditya teaches the secret of Aditya mantra to him. All of Ravana's ten heads fall to the ground one after the other. Vibhishana performs the funeral rites of his elder brother and gets ready to be coronated. Time has come for Rama to send for Sita.)

A t last the Rama-Ravana war was over, with the death of Ravana at the hands of Rama. It was the triumph of good over evil. The happiest of all were the Vanara soldiers. They praised Rama's courage and prowess sky-high. The devas, and other angelic beings from the heavens who watched the battle from

above returned to their abodes. Having completed his duty, Lord Indra's charioteer, Matali, who had served Rama during the final days of the war, took leave of Rama and went back with Indra's chariot.

Rama and Lakshmana, accompanied by Vibhishana, returned to their camp. "Our

SITA MEET RAMA





next duty will be to coronate Vibhishana," Rama told those who kept him company. Lakshmana called for golden pots and asked some Vanara soldiers to fill them with the waters of the oceans. He himself led Vibhishana to the throne. His ministers the few Rakshasas who had sided with him raised cries of victory and joy. Vibhishana promised them a just rule, devoid of corruption. He expressed his profound gratitude to the Vanara soldiers who fought for him and to Rama and Lakshmana who helped him in securing justice for him.

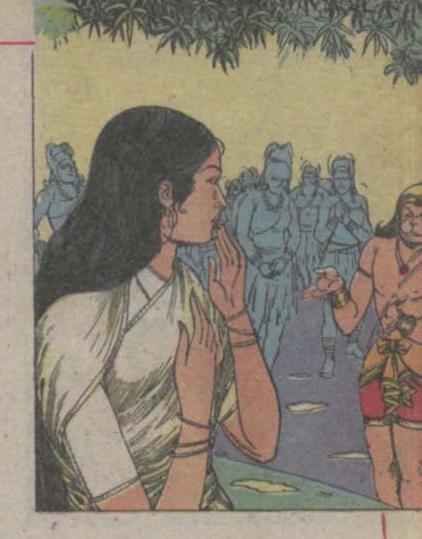
The Rakshasa soldiers of Lanka who had survived the war which their king had fought with Rama, now came forward to express their loyalty and allegiance to their new king. They brought several gifts for Vibhishana. They did not forget to please Rama and Lakshmana with similar gifts. The brothers were reluctant to accept them from the Rakshasas, but as Vibhishana pleaded on their behalf, Rama and Lakshmana accepted them with grace.

Hanuman was all the while standing by the side of Rama and Lakshmana in all reverence. Rama turned to him. "My good friend, let me send you on an important mission. Take the permission of King Vibhishana and go to Sitadevi and inform her of my victory over Ravana. Find out how she is, and bring me all her news."

The Vanara hero started for the city. Whoever accosted him on the way paid their obeisance to him. Hanuman reached the garden where Sita had been confined by Ravana. Evidently, she was not aware of his end. She appeared in deep sorrow. She was still being guarded by Rakshasa women. Hanuman went and stood in front of Sita. "I'm Hanuman, and it's my duty to serve you." Sita raised her head and recognised Hanuman. Copious tears fell down from her eyes.

"Devi! Sree Rama is well. So also brother Lakshmana," said Hanuman, to relieve her of all worries about her husband. "They're now with the victorious Vanara army led by Sugriva. Sree Rama has asked me to convey to you the happy news of his victory over his enemy. In this glorious achievement, he had the backing of Vibhishana, the strength of the Vanara army, and the will-power of Lakshmana. Now there is no more reason for you to be sad. Your sorrow has come to an end. Sree Rama is eager to find out how you are. Now that he has killed Ravana, you don't have to be afraid him any longer. Rama has already anointed Vibhishana as the King of Lanka. Now, you're very safe here. King Vibhishana is getting ready to call on you."

Sita was overjoyed to hear all



this from Hanuman. She found it difficult to express her feelings, and forgot herself. Hanuman wondered why she was remaining silent when she should have been jubilant. "Devi! You're still buried in your thoughts! May be you're sad as you're not with your lord to share the joy of his victory?"

"No, Hanuman, not at all," said Sita. "When I heard that my lord was victorious, I forgot myself. In fact I don't have enough words to thank you for bringing me such glad tidings. You've suffered for our sake.



Even if I were to search all nooks and corners, I may not come across a proper gift for you. I won't ever forget the help you've rendered."

Hanuman prostrated before Sita. "Devi! Even those few words from you have been musical to my ears. Should I need any more gifts from you? I consider myself as most fortunate. I very much wished that your lord should win the war with Ravana. My wish has been fulfilled. In this, my own role is very insignificant. I bow before the prowess of Sree Rama. You should have

seen the way the devas showered blessings from the heavens. I have now no other wish than an opportunity to watch his face all my life. Devi, good days are ahead for you!"

Sita complimented Hanuman on his humility and reverence for Rama. She told him how she had spent her days in the company of cruel Rakshasa women who used to threaten her with just one thing—that she would become the wife of Ravana. "Devi, if I've your permission, I shall even now see to it that none of them remains alive!" said Hanuman, now full of anger.

"There's no point in blaming them or punishing them," said Sita. "After all they were only doing what they were asked to do. If they had not obeyed Ravana's orders, they would have suffered punishment. It's not proper for us to get angry with them. It was all my Fate. I had to suffer all that. I've no anger towards any of them. Now that Ravana is no more, they may not trouble me. You don't bother about them."

Hanuman was surprised over Sita's kind-heartedness. He was

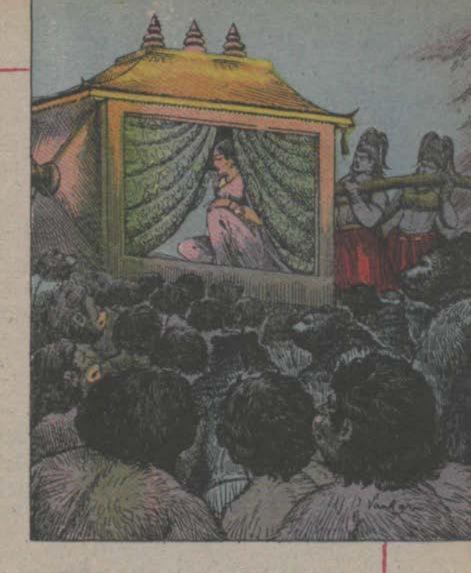


all praise for her. "You're fit to be Sree Rama's wife. All his qualities are reflected in you also. Devi, do tell me, what message shall I carry for him from you? He must be eagerly awaiting my return."

"I've only one wish left in me," said Sita. "I must meet my husband, as early possible. I don't have any other wish."

said Hanuman, who bowed to her and started for where Rama was awaiting him. As soon as he reached there, he said excitedly, "I met Sita Devi. She recognised me immediately. I told her of our victory over Ravana. Her face was aglow with joy. She is very anxious to meet you and Lakshmana. This is what she wanted me to tell you, my lord!"

Rama's eyes welled up. He fell silent for some time. Some thoughts worried him. 'Sita has all these days been in Ravana's confinement. What'll the world think of me if I were to accept her just like that? I know for certain that she is a chaste woman, but would the world consider her so? She must prove that she's still chaste. This will be a punishment



was unable to decide whether Sita should undergo any test.

Ultimately, he arrived at a decision. He turned to Vibhishana. "Please tell Sita that she should come here after taking a bath in scented water. Tell her that this is my wish." Vibhishana went to his palace and asked the women-folk there to go to Sita and convey Rama's wish and direction.

Sita did just as her lord had wished. When she came out of her bath, a palanquin awaited her. As soon as she got in, it was





borne by Rakshasa women. Sita bade farewell to Lanka. The palanquin was escorted by some soldiers when it left the city premises. They took her to where Rama was waiting for her.

Rama was still pensive. He was happy to see her after so many days. On the other hand, he doubted whether he should accept her or leave her for ever. These thoughts troubled him. Vibhishana suggested that Rama should be left alone for some time. "No, Vibhishana, let them be here. After all, they have been sharing our joys and sorrows all

these days. Let them also meet Sita."

Lakshmana and Sugriva now became apprehensive of Rama's thoughts and intention. They feared something terrible might happen. Vibhishana led Sita to Rama's presence. She was a picture of coy. She raised her head. The moment she saw him, tears ran down her cheeks in torrents.

Rama addressed her full of emotion. "I've killed Ravana and retrieved you, fulfilling my vow. Your kidnapping by Ravana had brought ill fame to me. To retrieve you, I crossed the seas with the help of Sugriva. Vibhishana also extended his help. The assistance rendered by Hanuman and other Vanara leaders and soldiers cannot be described in few words. By all their effort, we have become victorious."

As Sita listened to him, she was left to wonder. Why was Rama not enquiring after her welfare? They had been separated for several days, yet Rama had not enquired after her at all. A pall of gloom set on her. She had all along expected a kind word from her lord; but that was not forth-





coming from him.

Rama spoke again. "Sita, I had to clean myself of the ill fame caused by your kidnapping by Ravana. I waged a war and killed him. I had to wash off the insult he had heaped on me. You've been freed, and you're free now. You can do whatever you like. Wherever you're pleased to go, you are free to go. You've been in the confinement of another man; how then can I take you back? Ravana must have enjoyed looking at you and savouring your beauty. He spent his days in the hope that one day you'll become his wife. I'm not finding fault with you. But I don't think I can take you back. You don't deserve to live with me any longer. That's why I am letting you go anywhere you like. You may stay with

Lakshmana, or Bharata, or Sugriva, why even with Vibhishana, the King of Lanka. Anyone of them will look after you well. Whoever you think will make you happy, you may choose. I have fulfilled my vow; but I can't accept you again!"

Nobody present there at that time had expected Rama to be so cruel to Sita. They thought that, after a long separation, Rama would make his meeting with Sita memorable. They were shocked when Rama conclusively said he would not take back Sita. Lakshmana, Sugriva, and Hanuman were dumbstruck as they listened to Rama.

Sita's own sorrow and shock were indescribable. Life had become a curse to her once again.

-To continue





WORLD OF NATURE



Bee as fossil

Did honeybees exist 50 million years ago? Some German archaeologists want us to believe so, because they have discovered a tiny fossilised bee in a piece of rock strata in the Eifel region. They certify that the fossil is the oldest ever found in the world. The 9mm long bee, with some marginal differences, is like the present-day highly developed species.



Dinosaur eggs

China and the U.S.A. have reported discovery of dinosaur eggs dating 75 million years and 145 million years respectively. A pair from Henan, China, has reached the Paleontologic Institute in Hanover, Germany, where scientists are examining them to determine whether they contain

fossilised embryos. The lone broken egg found in a park near Denver, U.S.A., has a dark interior possibly containing a fossilised embryo or the remains of a yolk. Six similar finds of dinosaur eggshells had already been made in the Colarado region. One egg found in Utah is larger than a chicken egg.



Fruit bat in Tamilnadu

According to the Guinness Book of Records, there are three rarest bats in the world, one of them being the fruit bat. Forty-five years ago, ornithologist A.F. Hutton found one in the High Wavy mountains in Tamil Nadu, though he thought it was a common species. The specimen he brought to the Bombay Natural History Society was subsequently studied by another ornithologist, Kitti Thonglongya who declared that it was the rare Latidens and named it after India's most famous ornithologist, the late Dr. Salim Ali. Recently a scientist attached to the BNHS and another from the Harrison Zoological Museum, U.K., came upon a fruit bat (Latidens salimalii) in the same region in Tamilnadu. The two institutions have been studying bats for the last two years.





would borrow from everybody but would not care to or be prompt to repay the loans. If his creditors reminded him of the loans, he would have some ready excuse. People were aware of this, but instead of keeping him at a distance, they would like to be seen with him. Some of them at least.

One day, he went to the market-place. Four of his friends accompanied him. As they went by Parameshwar's restaurant, they could smell ghee being fried to make some delicacy. They could not resist the temptation of getting inside. "Parameshwar! You seem to be making milk toffee, aren't you? We can smell the ghee from a distance!" commented Vinayak.

"It's not milk toffee, sir," said

Parameshwar. "They're making mysore pav. Just taste this, and tell me how it's coming out!" He gave one piece to Vinayak. His friends smacked their lips. Each one of them got a piece. In no time, they had taken their place at the table and begun ordering all sorts of eatables. They almost emptied the shelves. Should they have bothered? After all, it was not their intention to pay for what they ate!

Parameshwar was intelligent and resourceful. He kept a proper count of the items taken by Vinayak and his friends. As he was busy writing the account, Vinayak went up to him and asked him, "So, you're keeping a count, eh?"

Parameshwar coolly said, "By now, your account totals some fifty rupees!"





Vinayak thought of a ruse to evade payment. He posed as if he was taking out his purse. "What a pity! This is not the shirt I wanted to put on today. And my purse is in the other shirt! It doesn't matter; I shall pay the money when I come this way again."

Parameshwar was all the while thinking of yet another strategy. "Don't worry. I shall write on the wall here DUES FROM VINAYAK: 50 RUPEES. That should remind you everytime you came this way!" He took a piece of charcoal from the fire-place and began scribbling on the wall.

"Stop that, Parameshwar!" shouted Vinayak. "If you write all that in such huge letters, all those who come here will know that I owe you money. That'll put

me to shame!"

"True, sir, I didn't think on those lines," said Parameshwar. "You'll feel ashamed. Not to worry, sir. If you can spare your silk shawl, we shall wipe out all that I had written with the shawl. The moment you make the payment, I shall clean the wall with your shawl."

Vinayak was now in a dilemma. If he did not pay Parameshwar, the writing on the wall will stare at him. If he were to postpone payment, Parameshwar would insist on his parting with the shawl—a silk shawl at that! He looked around and stealthily brought out his purse and paid the dues to Parameshwar. He then left the place with his followers.

Being virtuous is no feat once temptation ceases.



Admission Free?

Ponnayya was in charge of a drama troupe. Somehow, the dramas were not popular and did not attract a crowd. So much so, Ponnayya suffered a huge loss. He had to go and borrow money from his friend, Meyyappa, to pay salaries to the members of his troupe.

Meyyappa was not sure whether he would get back his money and when. He thought of a strategy. He sent his men all over the place to shout: "Ponnayya's troupe will put on boards SATYAVAN SAVITRY tonight!

Admission free!!"

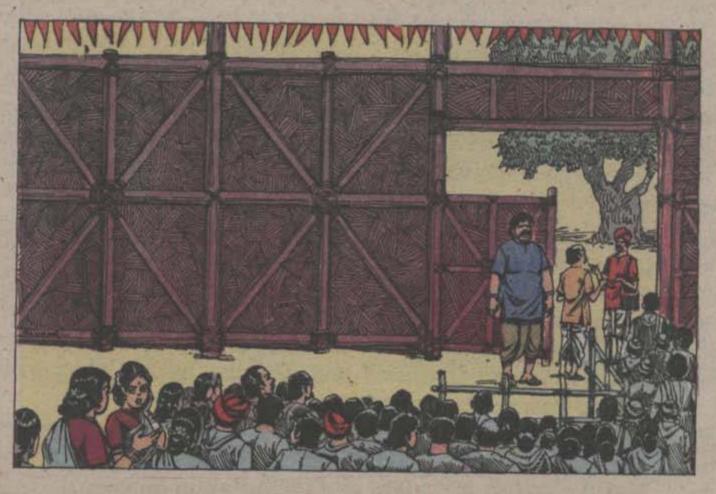
No wonder, that evening there was a good crowd; in fact, the hall was full. When the drama was over, the audience came out—only to find that the exit gates were closed and they could go out only if they paid one rupee each to the volunteers posted at the gates.

"What's this?" each one of them protested. "You had said admission was

free. Then why this fee?"

The volunteers explained. "It's true we had announced that entry was free. We never said exit also was free!"

To cut the story short, every one had to pay a rupee each to go out of the hall.







Doctors use the letter 'R' when they write out prescriptions. What does it mean, or stand for?

-M.D. Sirajuddin, Hyderabad

The letter 'R' stands for 'recipe' (Latin—infintive) which derives from 'recipere', meaning, both, to receive and to take. Not long ago, the prescriptions invariably directed the compounder to take something, add it to something, mix it with something else. Nowadays, such medicines, prescribed by the doctor and compounded in the pharmacy, are rare. Still the prescriptions ask the patients to take (better still, to receive) this tablet, or that tonic, or syrup, or ointment. Haven't you heard your aunt ask your mother for the 'recipe' of the delicacy she has prepared?

What was the film in which Charlie Chaplin made his debut? Which year?

— Manohar Mandal, Nabadweep

Charles Spencer Chaplin (1889-1977) acted in a silent movie when he was only 7 years old. It was a clog-dancing act. He made his reputation as a tramp, with a smudge moustache, bowler hat, and a cane in silent films from the mid-1910s. 'The Champion' was released in 1915, and 'The Rink' in 1916. 'Charlie' Chaplin was 'born' then.

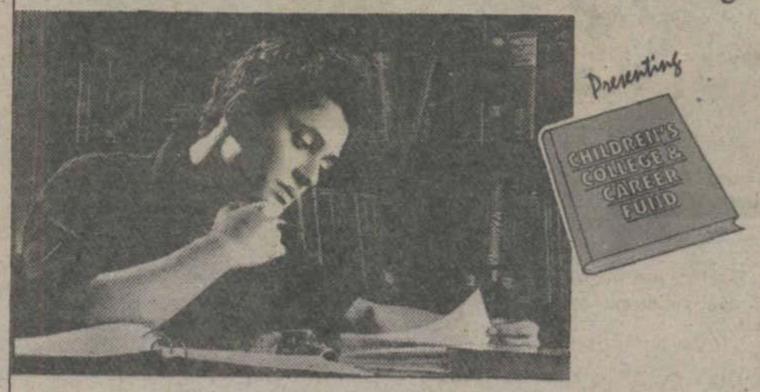
What is dead language?

- Laxmidhar Gahan, Bhadrak

A dead language is one that is no longer spoken or written as a means of communication—like 'Pali', which was spoken in north India in the 5th—2nd centuries B.C. It was very much like Sanskrit, which is still in use and is, therefore, a living language.



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The Winning entry: "Job" -- "Joy"

PICKS FROM THE WISE

No just man ever became rich all at once.

-Menander

As the life is, so is the speech.

-Harleville

Virtue alone outbuilds the pyramids.

-Young



